

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2440

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC HONOLULU

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 2706

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, RP

SUBJECT: BARBERO ON WEEDING OUT AFP MISFITS AND TRAINING
OF AFP CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

REF: (A) MANILA 2155, (B) MANILA 2357

1. AS PART OF THE CONTINUING GOP PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN
AGAINST "MISFITS IN THE PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES (AFP),
DEFENSE UNDERSECRETARY FOR CIVIL RELATIONS CARMELO BARBERO
ANNOUNCED IN DAVAO FEB 24 THAT AN AUDIT OF MILITARY PER-
SONNEL WOULD BE CONDUCTED SOON. ACCORDING TO BARBERO, THE
AUDIT (INVESTIGATION OF PERSONNEL) WILL BE CONDUCTED BY
THREE-MAN TEAMS ASSIGNED TO EVERY COMPANY UNIT IN AFP. EACH
AUDIT TEAM IS TO CONSIST OF A RECENT GRADUATE OF THE
PHILIPPINE MILITARY ACADEMY, A FIELD GRADE OFFICER AND A
CIVILIAN RESERVE OFFICER. BARBERO DESCRIBED THE AUDIT AS
ONE OF TWO MEASURES DEFENSE SECRETARY ENRILE IS IM-
PLEMENTING TO ENSURE THAT SOLDIERS ARE WORTHY OF PUBLIC
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TRUST AND ARE DOING THEIR PART FOR THE NEW SOCIETY.

2. THE OTHER MEASURE WHICH BARBERO ATTRIBUTED TO ENRILE CALLS FOR ESTABLISHMENT NO LATER THAN APRIL OF AN AFP CIVIL AFFAIRS SCHOOL. BARBERO SAID THAT CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICERS ARE TO BE TRAINED AND ASSIGNED TO EVERY COMPANY UNIT, PREFERABLY AS THE SECOND IN COMMAND. ACCORDING TO BARBERO, ENRILE ENVISAGES THE CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICER AS THE "CONSCIENCE" OF EVERY MILITARY UNIT. IT IS TO BE THE DUTY OF THE CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICER TO REMIND EACH SOLDIER THAT HE IS AN EVANGELIST OF THE NEW SOCIETY.

3. COMMENT. UNDERSECRETARY BARBERO HAS BEEN TALKING AN IMPRESSIVE GAME SINCE MARCOS BROUGHT HIM IN TWO MONTHS AGO TO HEAD UP THE NEW CIVIL RELATIONS SHOP AT DEFENSE. ONLY TIME WILL TELL THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CURRENT RHETORIC ABOUT CLEANUP IS TRANSCRIBED INTO DEEDS. WE CONTINUE TO HAVE DOUBTS THAT THE CLEARUP WILL REACH VERY HIGH INTO AFP RANKS. THE MORE SIGNIFICANT OF BARBERO'S REMARKS CONCERN THE PLANNED TRAINING AND POSTING OF CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICERS AS THE DEPUTY COMPANY COMMANDER LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE AFP STRUCTURE. TURNING TO THIS MECHANISM WHICH IS SO POPULAR IN MOST MILITARY REGIMES AS A DEVICE FOR POLITICAL CONTROL AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING WILL MERIT CLOSE WATCHING.
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